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ABSTRACT

The lack of parent involvement in an elementary school's parent drug education programs and related activities was addressed by the implementation of numerous strategies. Objectives included an increase in parent attendance at such programs and in completed and returned parent drug education homework assignments. Assisting in the implementation of selected strategies were students and parents. Students were involved in advertising the programs and in the writing of personal invitations for them. Parent volunteers assisted by making reminder phone calls to parents and by providing incentives to students whose parents were involved. Attendance sheets of parents attending drug education programs and the number of completed and returned parent homework assignments before strategies were implemented were compared to those after implementation. The results indicated increases in both parent attendance in drug education programs and in completed and returned parent homework assignments. Participation in the Drug Education Night for parents increased from 12 to 197 and participation in the Choices and Challenges Parent Drug Education Programs increased from 6 to 16. Parent homework assignments increased from between 32% and 43% to between 64% and 100%. (Author/ABL)

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"I WAS ALWAYS TOO BUSY, AM I TOO LATE?" A PARENTAL PLEA

A PROGRAM TO INCREASE PARENT PARTICIPATION IN DRUG EDUCATION PREVENTION PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

by

Michele Ann Monahan

A Practicum Report

Submitted to the Faculty of the Center for the Advancement of Education at Nova University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science

The abstract of this report may be placed in a national database system for reference.

July 1991

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Authorship Statement

I hereby testify that this paper and the work it reports are entirely my own. When it has been necessary to draw from the work of others, published or unpublished, I have acknowledged such work in accordance with accepted scholarly and editorial practice. I give this testimony freely, out of respect for the scholarship of other professionals in the field and in the hope that my own work, presented here, will earn similar respect.

Michele Ann Monahan

Michele Ann Monahan

Minor contributions of a professional character and comparable nonprofessional assistance may also be acknowledged.

ABSTRACT

"I Was Always Too Busy, Am I Too Late?" A Parental Plea
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The lack of parent involvement in an elementary school's parent drug education programs and related activities was addressed by the implementation of numerous strategies. Objectives included an increase in parent attendance at such programs and in completed and returned parent drug education homework assignments. Assisting in the implementation of selected strategies were students and parents. Students were involved in advertising the programs and in the writing of personal invitations for them. Parent volunteers assisted by making reminder phone calls to parents and providing incentives to students whose parents were involved.

Attendance sheets of parents attending drug education programs and the number of completed and return parent homework assignments before strategies were implemented were compared to those after implementation. The results indicated increases in both parent attendance in drug education programs and in completed and returned parent homework assignments.

It was concluded that the strategies utilized were successful and will increase parent involvement in drug education programs and related activities.

Results of this practicum will be shared with the faculty and administration of the target school and with the manager of the Health and Drug Free Schools Center within the county school system. Appendices include graphic analysis of increases in parent attendance and homework replies. Sample attendance sheets are also included.

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CHAPTER I

Purpose

The target elementary school in which this study took place is located in a suburban community in the fastest growing county in the nation. Composed of middle class socio-economic families, the area is continually being developed to meet the needs of this growth. Three elementary schools in the area have since been constructed, with a fourth school under construction.

The target school has just completed its seventh school year and services 1,098 students in kindergarten through fifth grade. The target school was originally constructed to accommodate 750 students. The additional population is housed in eight portable classrooms, the music and art rooms, and in conference rooms that have been converted into classrooms.

The target school's staff includes one principal, two assistant principals, one guidance counselor, one media specialist, eight special education teachers, forty-five classroom teachers, and six fine arts teachers. The target school also employs forty-one paraprofessionals.

The target school's motto is, "The Power of Positive Students" (P.O.P.S.). This deals with the enhancement of one's self-concept, which promotes school success. The administration,

faculty, paraprofessionals, and staff members have participated in P.O.P.S. training, creating a very unique environment for learning. The target school is a Center of Excellence and has an outstanding reputation for developing and maintaining a high calibre professional staff. Although there is an active Parent Teacher Association and Advisory Committee, there exists a lack of active parental involvement with regard to parent meetings and some school sponsored activities.

The target school offers child care services before and after school hours to accommodate working parents. Enrollment in this program is and has always been at its maximum capacity of 212 students. Thirty-one additional students attend other child care programs in the community. Eight hundred eighty-two families make up the target school student population. The majority of students are white, non-hispanic (967), followed by hispanic (75), Asian Pacific Islander (33), black, non-hispanic (16) and American Indian/Alaskan native (4).

The writer has concluded the seventh year of employment in the target school as a physical education/drug educator. In addition to planning and providing physical education for every student three days per week, the writer also teaches Me-ology drug prevention education classes. The classes meet one hour per week for 18 weeks. The writer is also a trainer of future Me-ology

teachers. Other responsibilities include coordinating and directing a "Just Say No" Club. This club services third and fourth grade students who meet one day per alternate week for one hour after school.

The writer has been a guest speaker at parent meetings, county workshops, and state conferences on subjects related to physical and drug education. In addition, this writer is a member of the Scheduling, Safety, and Fine Arts Day Committees. The yearly coordination of the "Red Ribbon Campaign" is also the responsibility of the writer. This campaign helps establish parent and community networks that, in turn, help to create a drug-free society.

The writer has been nominated by the target school's faculty and has received the county, "I Make a Difference Teacher of the Month" award. The writer has also been nominated and has been selected as one of the five finalists for the William T. Dwyer Excellence in Education Award. Other citations include the Teacher of the Year Award by the Rotary Club, the Outstanding Young Educator of the Year Award by the Jaycees, and the nomination for Outstanding Physical Education Teacher of the Year Award, from the Florida Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation, Dance, and Driver Education.

Problem Statement

The family, not the school, provides the primary educational environment for children. Through their words and actions, family members express values and opinions about alcohol and other drugs (Henderson, 1988). Schools can educate students about them, but the job of defining clear expectations and a value structure must be done by the family. For this reason the role of parents in drug education is critical. Family participation in drug education activities can reinforce and expand the education provided in the classroom. In the absence of clear, reliable and objective information about the health effects of drugs, the prevention of drug abuse in our society is all but impossible. Prevention is the key. Involving parents when their children are young has beneficial effects that persist throughout the child's lifetime (Jowert and Baginsky, 1988).

The problem this writer found at the target school was a lack of parental participation in drug education/prevention programs and their related activities. Evidence supporting this includes poor attendance at such functions and minimal replies of parental homework assignments directly related to the drug education curriculum.

It is important for the reader to understand how much of the student population was involved in drug education, so as to better

understand the magnitude of the discrepancy that existed at the target school. Three of the six fifth grade classes were receiving 18 weeks of drug education. Also, students in grades three and four could become members of the "Just Say No" Club on a volunteer basis, as meetings were conducted after school. Enrollment of the club was 130 members.

Last year, slightly over one percent of the entire parent population participated in Parent Drug Education Night, as was measured by a head count (12/1100). Less than one-half percent (6/1100) attended Choices and Challenges Parent Drug Prevention Education Programs that teach effective parenting skills as a preventive tool to drug abuse. Roughly 40 percent of parents of fifth grade Me-ology students (12/30) completed and returned drug education homework assignments.

What was needed was an increase in the number of parents participating in the programs so that at least 15 percent of parents (165/1100) would be in attendance at Parent Drug Education Night and three percent (31/1100) at Choices and Challenges programs. An increase in the number of parents that completed and returned drug education homework assignments to 56 percent (approximately 17/30, depending upon class size) was also needed. The target group of this study included all teachers, students, and parents of the target school's student population.

This writer proposed the following objectives to remedy the considerable lack of parental participation in drug education prevention programs and related activities at the target school.

1. Over a period of 18 weeks, parents attending Parent Drug Education Night will increase 14 percent, as measured by sign-in attendance sheets and a videotape check-out sheet.
2. Over a period of 18 weeks, parents attending Choices and Challenges Parent Drug Prevention Education Programs will increase 2.5 percent, as measured by sign-in attendance sheets.
3. Over a period of 18 weeks, the number of parents of fifth grade students receiving drug education who complete and return the required three drug education homework assignments will increase 16 percent. Homework assignments returned will be counted and recorded as a fraction on a status sheet.

CHAPTER II

Research and Solution Strategy

William Bennett, in his address to the International Association of Chiefs of Police, emphasized that in the 1960's and 1970's the attitude existed that schools should do the schooling without interference from families, neighborhoods, or churches. Americans learned that this did not work. Today, a similar lesson is being learned about children and drugs as the United States has the highest rate of youthful drug abuse of any industrialized country in the world (Bennett, 1986). Schools need help; help from families.

In 1988, a survey was conducted for the Florida Department of Education involving 74 public schools in 33 counties across Florida. In "Report Describes Students' Drug Use," questionnaires were studied from a representative sample of 13,818 students in grades six, eight, ten, and twelve. Having a margin of error of 1.65 percent, it is described as the most thorough study of drug and alcohol abuse among students in Florida.

The survey found that 34 percent of high school students (grades ten and twelve) said they first used drugs before age 10, while 26 percent of students in middle school (grades six and eight) said the same. Most students at all four grade levels

reported experimental use (meaning one to six times a year) of alcohol or drugs. Alcohol is the most widely abused substance, with 57 percent of those in middle school and 78 percent of those in high school saying they had consumed it in the last year. Nineteen percent of middle school students and 37 percent of high school students have used illegal drugs in the past year, with marijuana the most popular, followed by cocaine, "uppers," "downers," inhalants, hallucinogens and other drugs. The survey also contends that drug abuse increases with age. Four percent of sixth grade students reported using marijuana compared to 15 percent of eighth grade students, 27 percent of tenth and 40 percent of twelfth grade students.

Young people who are curious about drugs are a reflection of America's drug-oriented culture (American Association of School Administrators, 1985). Many are bombarded with advertising messages that convey there is a pharmaceutical answer to everything that may go wrong in one's life. Because so many adults rely on drugs of one kind or another for normal living, children pick up the message that drugs are acceptable and resort to experimenting with them. According to Bennett, the drug problem is the greatest threat to the well-being of our children. He contends that solving this problem will require an appropriate division of labor. Whether or not a child gets involved with

drugs depends a lot on the values taught from the youngest age including the moral guidance received at home and at school.

Based on the relevant research reviewed, the writer feels that parents should be more concerned about the increase in drug and alcohol abuse among our youth. Also of great concern is the social acceptability of this use which makes drug use a more viable resource to their children. The writer, moreover, saw a need to help reduce the incidence of drug use by implementing effective strategies to involve more parents in drug education prevention programs and activities at the target school.

Since its founding in 1977, the American Council for Drug Education has been dedicated to the principle that an informed public is the nation's best defense against drug abuse. There is abundant evidence that knowledge will help to reduce drug experimentation and even drug use among people of all ages (Hawley, 1984).

The role of parents in drug education is critical. The National Highway Safety Administration feels that although young people can gain valuable information and facts about alcohol and drug use and abuse in school, "values education" is the primary responsibility of the family.

It is stated throughout the literature that families need to start early before a problem exists. Drug abuse prevention begins

in the home. Parents need to educate themselves with basic information and take a clear stand on alcohol and drugs. In "The Best Prevention: Model Alcohol and Drug Education Programs," informational and skill building approaches are emphasized. When parents are better informed and aware of alcohol and drug issues, they can help teach their children and recognize problems at an early age. In "Growing Up Drug Free: A Parent's Guide to Prevention," it is noted that many parents hesitate to discuss alcohol and other drug use with their children because it is believed they would not become involved with illegal substances. Others delay because they do not know what to say or how to say it, or are afraid of putting ideas into their child's head. The fact that many young people in treatment programs say that they had used alcohol and other drugs for at least two years before their parents knew about it is strong evidence in the defense of prevention. Children need to know that parents are concerned and that they can work together to find answers.

In a 1982 "Iowa Study of Alcohol and Drug Attitudes and Behaviors Among Youth," students in grades six, eight, ten, and twelve indicated that their parents were the most important source of influence in their substance nonuse decisions and the most important source of substance information. According to the American Association of School Administrators, good communication

between parents and children is the most effective means of preventing drug and alcohol abuse. If parents have a working knowledge of common drugs they can be discussed intelligently with their children. They should be prepared to answer questions about drugs openly, honestly, and non-judgementally. Well informed parents are also better able to recognize if a child has symptoms of alcohol or drug-related problems. Research shows that at a minimum parents should:

1. Know the different types of drugs and alcohol most commonly used and the dangers associated with each.

2. Be able to identify paraphernalia associated with each drug.

3. Be familiar with street names of drugs.

4. Know what drugs look like.

5. Know the signs of alcohol and other drug use and be alert for changes in behavior or appearance.

6. Know how to get help promptly if they suspect their child may be using alcohol and/or other drugs.

These topics were addressed at Drug Education Night for Parents held at the target school.

Two of the most effective prevention tools are awareness of the problem and a knowledge of ways to help motivate children to resist pressure to use drugs. In addition, to an informational

approach, the National Highway Safety Administration also supports a skill building approach as a method to education parents. Children need help in developing positive attitudes, self confidence and values. In "Parents, Peers, and Pot,--II: Parents in Action," Manatt emphasized that young people must be able to feel that it is acceptable not to participate in the use of alcohol or drugs and wished that parents would take a stand to help our youth. She contended that children are more apt to take it seriously when this occurs. Manatt also emphasized that it is in the family that children can get the help they need to build a strong foundation of self-confidence and well being for the future. Children will have to make their way in a world that is filled with opportunities to use alcohol and drugs. "Parents can help them by understanding what they are facing, talking with them about the problem, keeping communication open, and preparing them to say "No" when the opportunity to use alcohol and drugs arises." (Manatt, 1983:118).

Studies show children who feel good about themselves are better able to withstand peer pressure to engage in dangerous or illegal behavior. Lively family discussions build a child's self-esteem and develop thinking skills and reasoning abilities. Van Devender feels that parents are to be reminded to talk and listen to their children. The Choices and Challenges Parent Drug

Prevention Education Program is designed to build, improve, and enhance generic parenting skills on the theory that this will improve family interaction and communication and, in turn, reduce alcohol and drug use. This program was presented in four parts to parents of the target school's student population.

If parental involvement has a positive impact on children, why then are parents not involved? To the working parent, hurrying has become the accepted way of life. Today, parents do not have the time to be as involved in the schools as they have been in the past. Even if they do become involved, they cannot always be consistent in their efforts because of demands of their jobs and families (Van Devender, 1988).

The breakdown of the family and mobility in our society have also contributed to the lack of parental involvement. What did this writer do to increase parental involvement in drug education programs and activities to help show students that their parents place value on drug education and are willing to contribute to it? After exploring the relevant literature and discussing it with administrators and colleagues, the writer found it necessary to implement strategies designed to increase parental involvement in drug education programs and activities.

The writer's first source of strategy information was talking with students involved in drug education at the target

school. Third and fourth grade "Just Say No" Club members, as well as fifth grade Me-ology students were asked to brainstorm with each other on ways to get their parents more involved in attending drug education programs and completing drug education homework assignments. After students spontaneously engaged in critiquing each other's thinking, a list of agreed upon possible strategies was developed.

Initially, students suggested having the target school offer free babysitting services for their younger siblings on meeting nights. Very often only one parent is home in the evening and is unable to attend. Secondly, students felt that the meeting should be advertised on the morning and afternoon announcements, as well as on posters displayed throughout the target school. This, they felt, would remind students to remind their parents of upcoming meetings. Lastly, students recommended incentives in the form of parties be given to the third or fourth grade "Just Say No" Club that had the most parents in attendance at Drug Education Night for Parents and Choices and Challenges meetings. It was also suggested that parties be given to the fifth grade Me-ology class that had the most parent homework assignments completed and returned. If a prize were offered, students responded that they would be more apt to encourage their parents to attend the meetings and bring the parent homework assignments to their

attention. Completed homework assignments showed direct support of the Me-ology drug education prevention curriculum.

As evening activities involving children resulted in increased attendance, the writer combined a "Just Say No" Club meeting for students with the Drug Education Night for Parents. Students were in a separate classroom from their parents and were required to attend if they desired a club t-shirt. Although the parent meeting was held in conjunction with a "Just Say No" Club meeting, all parents received a letter of invitation one week prior to the meeting.

In the Principal's Monthly Newsletter, the writer shared with parents how important they are in determining their child's attitude toward using chemical substances, the importance of modeling behaviors and in establishing expectations for the child. Parents, not their child's peer group, will usually be the determining factor in drug use by their child. The writer also encouraged parents to attend meetings by conveying what was to be offered: drug information, strategies for dealing more effectively with their children, and answers to their questions.

An additional strategy, which has had a positive effect in the past, involved the sending home of personal individual invitations written by students to invite their parents to attend the meetings. Creative and practical aspects of thinking was

demonstrated as each invitation was the personal creation of the student; not a standardized invitation. Research has shown this to be an effective strategy, as it gives a personal touch and sends the message to parents that the target school and students genuinely care and desire their attendance. Each classroom teacher in the target school, therefore, enlisted the help of their students in this endeavor via a creative writing assignment, if appropriate for their grade level. This invitation served as a reinforcement to the initial letters of invitation that all students received. Extending invitations to the media was also suggested as an advertising technique, as was the sending home of reminder flyers the day before the meeting.

Lauderman noted that generally a letter to encourage parents to become involved will not have any impact upon the apathetic parent. This parent will need a personal contact in the form of a telephone call. The writer enlisted the help of room mothers to make personal phone calls to parents reminding them of upcoming meetings and the importance of their attendance at these meetings.

The media specialist at the target school suggested videotaping the meetings. Parents who found it impossible to attend the meeting checked out a videotape and viewed the meeting at home at their own convenience. This allowed both parents the opportunity to become more aware and informed and to pass the videotape on to relatives.

The goal of a healthy, happy, well-educated child is one shared by educators and parents. Reaching that goal takes a great deal of hard work by teachers, parents, and of course, students. Teachers and school administrators take pride in making a difference in the lives of their students. They strive to challenge children to stretch intellectually, socially, and emotionally; and they are best able to do this when they work in partnership with parents. Teachers want and need parents who are interested and involved. The New Jersey State Department of Education (1986:3) wrote that the most important teachers children will ever have are their parents. "They are a child's first teachers as they guide the development of values, character, and skills in language, math, and physical education long before they begin school. Once in school, moreover, parents continue to have a tremendous impact."

By being an active, visible, informed member of the educational team, parents can help their child develop to the fullest extent possible; and drug free.

CHAPTER III

Methodology

In early winter, this writer devised and implemented a program that increased parent participation in drug education prevention programs and activities. The population of the study included all teachers, students, and parents of the target school's student population. In order to implement the practicum proposal, the writer outlined the critical tasks which were necessary for carrying out the solution strategy. The following tasks were identified in order to increase parent attendance at Drug Education Night for Parents.

1. The writer provided an overview of the importance of parent attendance at Drug Education Night to the target school teachers, administration, and parent population.

2. The writer brainstormed with drug education students in order to develop ways to increase parent participation at meetings. After students agreed upon strategies, they were reviewed for effectiveness by the writer and implemented.

3. The writer effectively advertised meeting dates.

4. The writer requested assistance from all teachers to involve students in the creating and writing of personal invitations to meetings in order to increase parent participation.

5. The writer enlisted the assistance of parent volunteers in making reminder phone calls to parents in order to increase parent participation.

6. The writer advertised incentives to the "Just Say No" Club that had the most parents in attendance at the meeting.

7. The writer secured the materials needed to provide an ice-cream party to the "Just Say No" Club that had the most parents in attendance.

The following tasks were identified in an effort to increase parent attendance at Choices and Challenges Parent Drug Prevention Education Programs:

1. The writer provided an overview of the importance of parent attendance at Choices and Challenges programs to the target school teachers, administration, and parent population.

2. The writer communicated with the Choices and Challenges leader regarding meeting dates, times, and materials needed.

3. The writer effectively advertised meeting dates and requested parent responses if they were planning to attend.

4. The writer enlisted the assistance of parent volunteers in making reminder phone calls to increase parent participation.

The following tasks were identified in order to increase the number of parent drug education homework assignments completed and returned; thereby supporting the drug education curriculum:

1. The writer advertised incentives to classes to return the most parent homework assignments.

2. The writer secured materials needed for cake and ice cream parties.

The following is an outline which shows implementation of this project over an 18 week period at the target school.

WEEK 1:

The writer discussed with the principal of the target school the importance of Drug Education Night for Parents and the need for increased attendance. A meeting date and time was set. The writer explained Drug Education Night for Parents and the importance of attendance in the Principal's Monthly Newsletter. The writer brainstormed with students in the "Just Say No" Club on ways to involve their parents (four hours/week).

WEEK 2:

The writer met with the Choices and Challenges Program leader to discuss and set dates and times for future meetings. The writer organized a booth for the target school carnival to advertise Drug Education Night for Parents. Under the direction of the writer, students in the "Just Say No" Club brainstormed and listed ideas for posters which were made and displayed at the target school carnival and throughout the target school,

encouraging parent participation. The writer secured guest speakers for Drug Education Night for Parents, as well as child care workers for parents needing supervision of their children. The writer enlisted the help of the media specialist who videotaped the meetings. The tapes were used via a checkout procedure by parents unable to attend the meeting (seven hours/week).

WEEK 3:

The writer assisted the "Just Say No" Club students in making posters advertising the meeting. The writer manned a booth at the target school's carnival in order to disseminate information related to Drug Education Night for Parents. Posters were also displayed throughout the target school carnival (eight hours/week).

WEEK 4:

At a faculty meeting the writer explained and discussed the need for an increase in parent attendance at Drug Education Night for Parents. The writer requested assistance from each classroom teacher to incorporate critical thinking skills into their creative writing lessons. Through these lessons, the following critical thinking skills were utilized: teachers brainstormed with students as to what should be included in the invitations as

far as possible tactics to encourage attendance and information. Teachers also encouraged students to relate the subject matter of the meetings to their personal lives and experiences and to demonstrate their creativity by artistically personalizing their invitations. Students designed personal invitations for their parents inviting them to Drug Education Night for Parents. The writer enlisted the assistance of the target school's Volunteers in Public Schools leader to secure a list of room mothers. Room mothers were asked to telephone parents of assigned rooms reminding parents of the upcoming meeting (three hours/week).

WEEK 5:

The writer composed a letter announcing and explaining the importance of Drug Education Night for Parents. Letters were sent home one week prior to the meeting date. Student's personal invitations were written and sent home. The writer notified the media of the meeting (two hours/week).

WEEK 6:

The writer prepared and disseminated reminder flyers, which were sent home with each student. The writer reminded room mothers to make parent telephone calls. The writer advertised the meeting on the morning and afternoon announcements at the target school two days prior and up to the meeting date. The writer

also announced a grade level contest which determined which grade level had the most parents in attendance at the meeting (four hours/week).

WEEK 7:

The writer designed attendance sheets for parents to sign in as they entered the meeting. This sheet was used to show either an increase or decrease in parent attendance. The writer notified the custodial foreman regarding physical set-up needs for the meeting, as well as the media specialist for audio-visual needs. The writer organized the agenda for the meeting and secured volunteers to oversee parent sign-in sheets. Drug Education Night for Parents took place (two hours/week).

WEEK 8:

The writer evaluated parent sign-in sheets. Results were obtained in these categories: total number of parents and number of parents of children from each grade level. The writer provided an ice cream party to the third or fourth grade "Just Say No" Club that had the most parents in attendance. The writer made multiple copies of the videotape of the meeting to be used by parents that were unable to attend the meeting. The writer devised a letter which was printed in the Principal's Monthly Newsletter explaining the availability of the videotape and check-out procedures. A

sign-out sheet was also devised so as to accurately measure the number of parents using this resource. This number was added to the number of parents in attendance at the meeting. The writer enlisted the assistance of the secretarial staff at the target school to oversee check-out procedures (eight hours/week).

WEEK 9:

The writer assigned the first drug education homework assignment to parents of fifth grade Me-ology students and requested that they be completed and returned. The writer introduced the Choices and Challenges Parent Drug Prevention Education Program in the Principal's Monthly Newsletter (one hour/week).

WEEK 10:

The writer received parent homework assignments and calculated class percentages (45 minutes/week).

WEEK 11:

The writer secured a letter of invitation to Choices and Challenges meetings from the Choices and Challenges leader. The writer personalized this letter on target school letterhead and disseminated it to every student. The writer met with the Choices and Challenges leader to learn of needs for upcoming meeting dates (audio-visual, physical set-up, etc.) (two hours/week).

WEEK 12:

The writer secured materials needed for posters and banners. The writer enlisted the assistance of "Just Say No" Club members for poster and banner making to advertise the Choices and Challenges meetings. The writer enlisted the assistance of parent volunteers who made reminder phone calls to parents who indicated on the invitation that they would be able to attend (five hours/week).

WEEK 13:

The writer assigned the second drug education homework assignment to parents of fifth grade Me-ology students and requested that they be completed and returned. The writer announced the parent homework contest. The class with the most assignments completed by parents and returned (as measured as a fraction depending on class size) won and received an ice cream party. The writer secured materials needed for an ice cream party. The writer notified the custodial foreman regarding physical set-up needs, as well as the media specialist for audio-visual needs. The writer designed parent attendance sheets for the Choices and Challenges programs. The writer attended Choices and Challenges programs one and two. The writer awarded a baseball pennant or "Just Say No" bracelet to students whose

baseball pennant or "Just Say No" bracelet to students whose parents were in attendance at each program. Recipients were also recognized on the morning announcements as an added incentive to students to encourage their parents to attend future meetings (seven hours/week).

WEEK 14:

The writer received parent homework assignments and calculated class percentages. The writer enlisted the assistance of parent volunteers to provide the winning class with an ice cream party. The writer calculated the number of parents in attendance at Choices and Challenges programs one and two. The writer attended Choices and Challenges programs three and four. The writer again awarded a baseball pennant or "Just Say No" bracelet to students whose parents were in attendance at each program. Recipients were also recognized on the morning announcements. The writer brainstormed with parents as to why so few parents were in attendance and possible solutions to remedy this (four hours/week).

WEEK 15:

The writer calculated the number of parents in attendance at Choices and Challenges programs three and four. The writer requested donations from McDonald's for a cake party (one

hour/week).

WEEK 16:

The writer secured materials needed for a McDonald's cake party which was used as an incentive for the fifth grade Me-ology students' parent homework assignment contest (45 minutes/week).

WEEK 17:

The writer assigned the third drug education homework assignment to parents of fifth grade Me-ology students and requested that they be completed and returned. The writer announced the parent homework contest (15 minutes/week).

WEEK 18:

The writer received parent homework assignments and calculated class percentages. The writer enlisted the assistance of volunteers to provide the winning class with a cake party (one hour, 15 minutes/week).

CHAPTER IV

Results

As slightly over one percent of parents participated in Drug Education Night for Parents in the past (12/1100), it was this writer's intention to increase this number 14 percent to at least 165/1100 in attendance. After implementing strategies to increase parent participation and following Drug Education Night for Parents, attendance sheets were tabulated. Post-implementation attendance sheets were compared to pre-implementation attendance sheets. One hundred eighty-three parents were in attendance. In addition, seven two-parent families checked out a videotape of the meeting; a total of 197 parents, or 17.9 percent. This was a gain of 2.9 percent over the pre-implementation objective of 15 percent. These results show a lower number of parents in attendance than the actual number present because as parents arrived late they failed to sign attendance sheets or they entered a different door where attendance sheets were not placed. The results are displayed in graph form in the appendices of this report (Appendix A:35).

Previously, less than one-half percent (6/1100) of parents attended Choices and Challenges Parent Drug Education Programs. It was the writer's intention to increase this number 2.5 percent to at least 31/1100 in attendance at each of the four programs.

After implementing strategies and following the completion of each of the Choices and Challenges Programs, attendance sheets were tabulated. Post-implementation attendance sheets were compared to pre-implementation attendance sheets. Fifteen parents were in attendance at program number one. This was a gain of nine parents or .8 percent. Sixteen parents were in attendance at program two. This was a gain of ten parents or .9 percent. Program three had twelve parents in attendance; a gain of six parents or .5 percent. At program number four, sixteen parents were in attendance. This was a gain of 10 parents or .9 percent.

Table 1

Choices and Challenges Parent Drug Prevention Education Program Attendance Results

Program Number	Parent Attendance Pre-Implementation	Parent Attendance Post-Implementation	Difference in Parent Attendance
1	6	15	9 or .8%
2	6	16	10 or .9%
3	6	12	6 or .5%
4	6	16	10 or .9%

Although the results showed an increase in parent attendance at each program, the pre-implementation objective of 31 parents at each program; or 3 percent, was not met. After brainstorming with

parents in attendance at program number four and with students, numerous reasons were cited for the lack of attendance with suggestions given for next year. Parents stressed the need for child care services at the target school as many wished to attend but were unable due to this responsibility. Suggestions also included scheduling the programs over four weeks instead of two programs each week for two weeks. Parents expressed they could not afford the time. In addition, since the programs took place immediately following a vacation break, many parents were unable to be reached for a reminder phone call. One of the major reasons that parents and students expressed for not attending was the schedule conflict with the spring little league baseball season. What was expressed as successful in increasing parent attendance was the awarding of incentives to students in the form of baseball pennants and bracelets and having their names announced on the morning announcements, if their parents were present at the programs. The attendance results are displayed in graph form in the appendices of this report (Appendices B:36, C:37).

Roughly 40 percent of the parents of fifth grade Me-ology students completed and returned their drug education homework assignments in the past. Parent homework assignments returned were counted and recorded as a fraction and percentage for each class as a status sheet before and after implementation of strategies. It was the writer's pre-implementation objective to

increase this number by 16 percent for each class. Pre-implementation responses involved assignment number one and were compared to post-implementation results involving assignments number two and three to see if a significant increase was found. Pre-implementation responses were tabulated and are as follows: Teacher A returned nine of a possible 21 completed assignments, or 43 percent. Teacher B returned eight of a possible 25 completed assignments, or 32 percent. Teacher C returned eight of a possible 25 completed assignments, or 32 percent.

Post-implementation responses were tabulated and are as follows: Teacher A returned fourteen of a possible 20 completed assignments, or 70 percent for assignment number two. Eighteen of a possible 18 completed assignments, or 100 percent were returned for assignment number three; an increase of 27 and 57 percent respectively over the results of assignment number one. Teacher B returned nineteen of a possible 25 completed assignments, or 76 percent for assignment number two. Eighteen of a possible 21 completed assignments, or 86 percent were returned for assignment number three; an increase of 44 and 54 percent respectively over assignment number one results. Teacher C returned sixteen of a possible 25 completed assignments, or 64 percent for assignment number two. Eighteen of a possible 25 completed assignments, or 72 percent were returned for assignment number three; an increase of 32 and 40 percent respectively over assignment number one.

Table 2

Parent Homework Assignments of Fifth Grade Me-ology Students
Reply Results

Assignment Number One (before implementing strategies)			
Teacher A	9/21 returned	=	43 percent
Teacher B	8/25 returned	=	32 percent
Teacher C	8/25 returned	=	32 percent
Assignment Number Two (after implementing strategies)			
Teacher A	14/20 returned	=	70 percent
Teacher B	19/25 returned	=	76 percent
Teacher C	16/25 returned	=	64 percent
Assignment Number Three (after implementing strategies)			
Teacher A	18/18 returned	=	100 percent
Teacher B	18/21 returned	=	86 percent
Teacher C	18/25 returned	=	72 percent

This writer was successful in attaining the pre-implementation objectives of a 16 percent increase per class in returned parent homework assignments. The fifth grade Me-ology students stated that the use of incentives in the form of parties made a significant difference as to whether or not they brought the homework assignments to their parents attention. Because rumor quickly spread of the success of the initial party for assignment number two results, more students involved their parents in assignment number three. The assignment results are displayed in graph form in the appendices of this report (Appendices D:38, E:39, F:40).

CHAPTER V

Recommendations

The results obtained from this practicum will be shared with the faculty and administration of the target school and with the manager of the Health and Drug Free Schools Center within the county school system. Although two of the three pre-implementation objectives were achieved, all stated objectives are feasible and realistic for attainment if modifications are made as described in the results chapter. It is the writer's intent, with the cooperation of the administration and the Health and Drug Free Schools Center, to provide staff development to all drug educators within the county school system. Effective strategies to increase parent participation in drug education prevention programs and activities will be provided as an inservice opportunity.

The information derived will also be shared with the Florida Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation, Dance, and Driver Education in the hope of presenting the results of this study at their annual conference.

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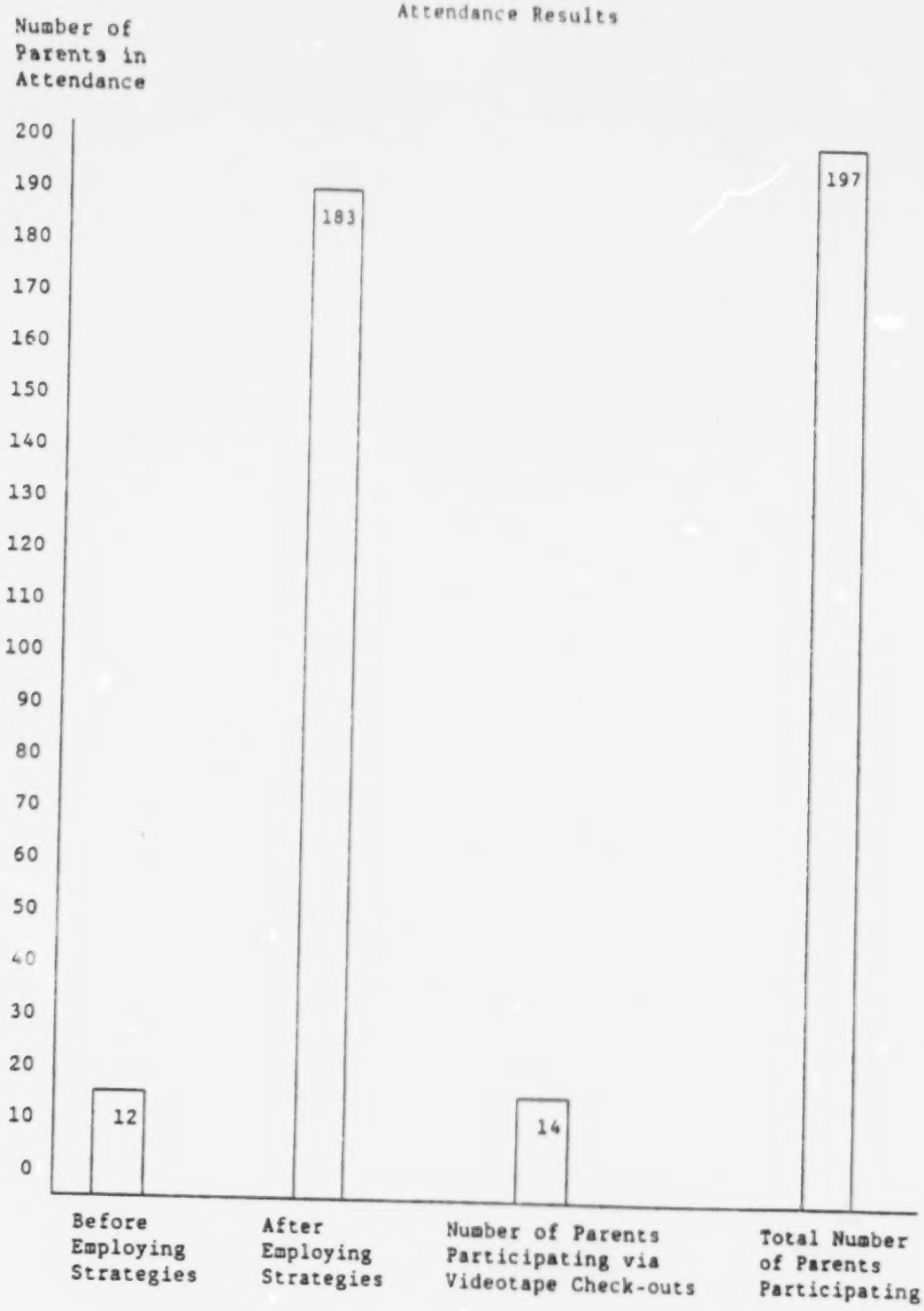
APPENDIX A

DRUG EDUCATION NIGHT FOR PARENTS

Attendance Results



$\frac{12}{1100} = .01\%$ $\frac{183}{1100} + \frac{14}{1100} = \frac{197}{1100} = 17.9\%$

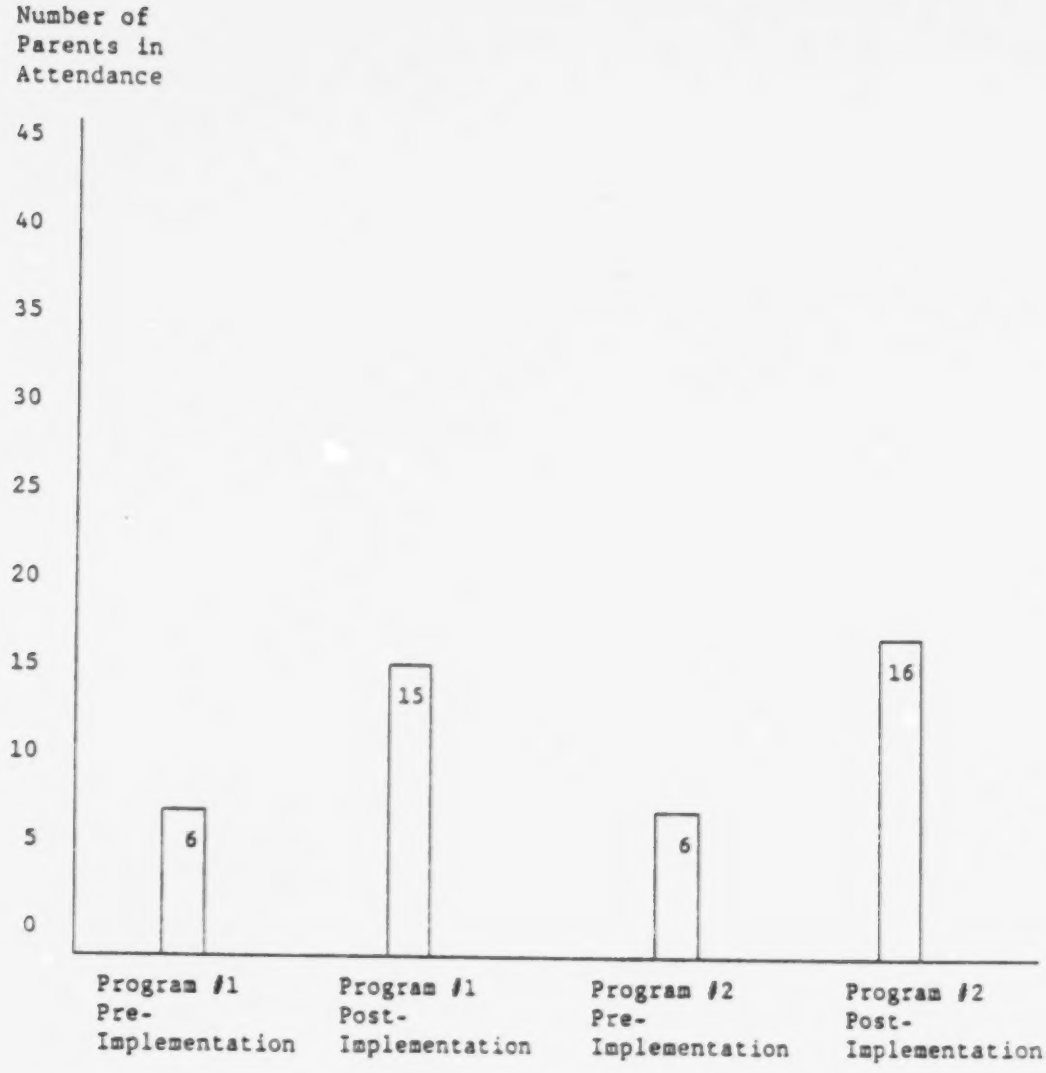
APPENDIX B

CHOICES and CHALLENGES

Parent Drug Prevention Education Program

Attendance Results

Programs One and Two



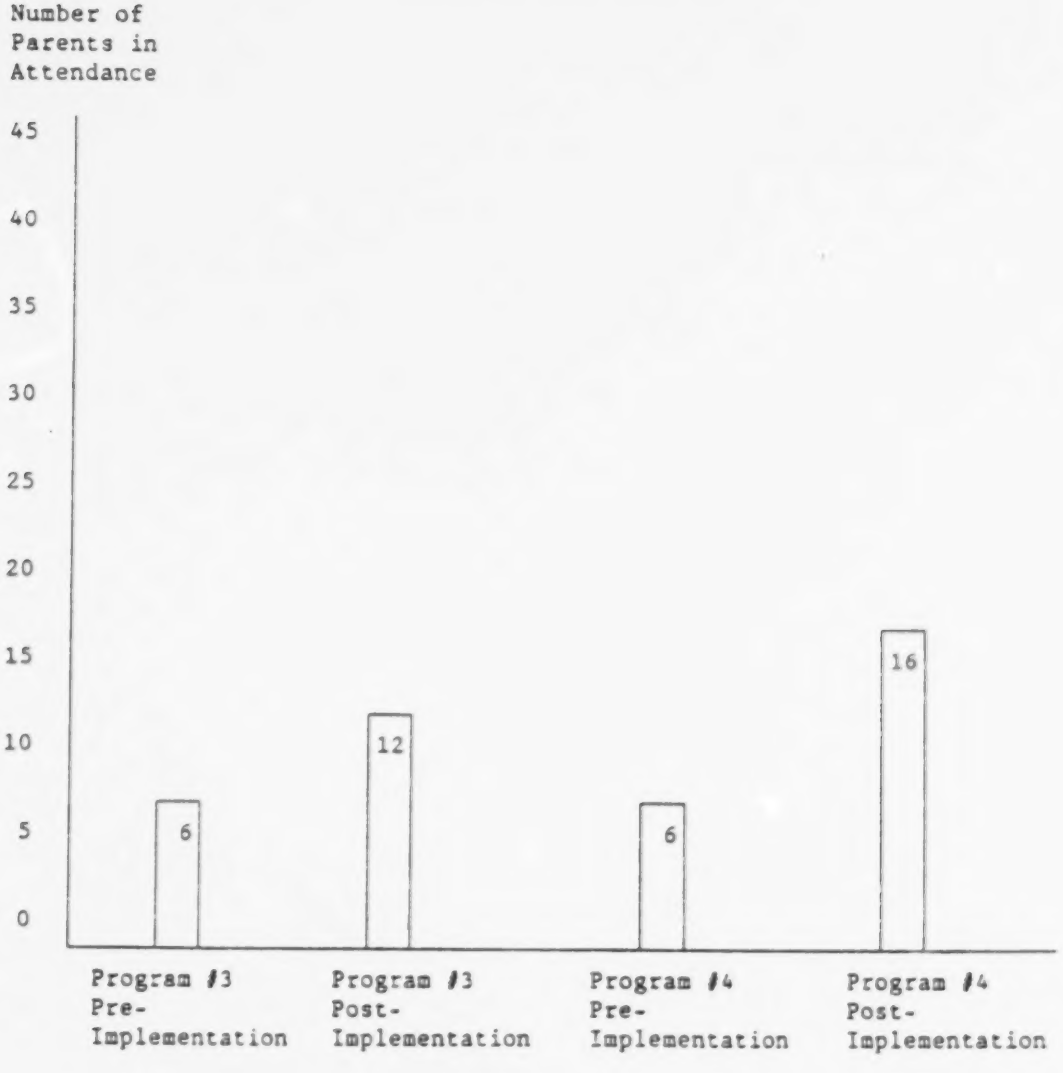
APPENDIX C

CHOICES and CHALLENGES

Parent Drug Prevention Education Program

Attendance Results

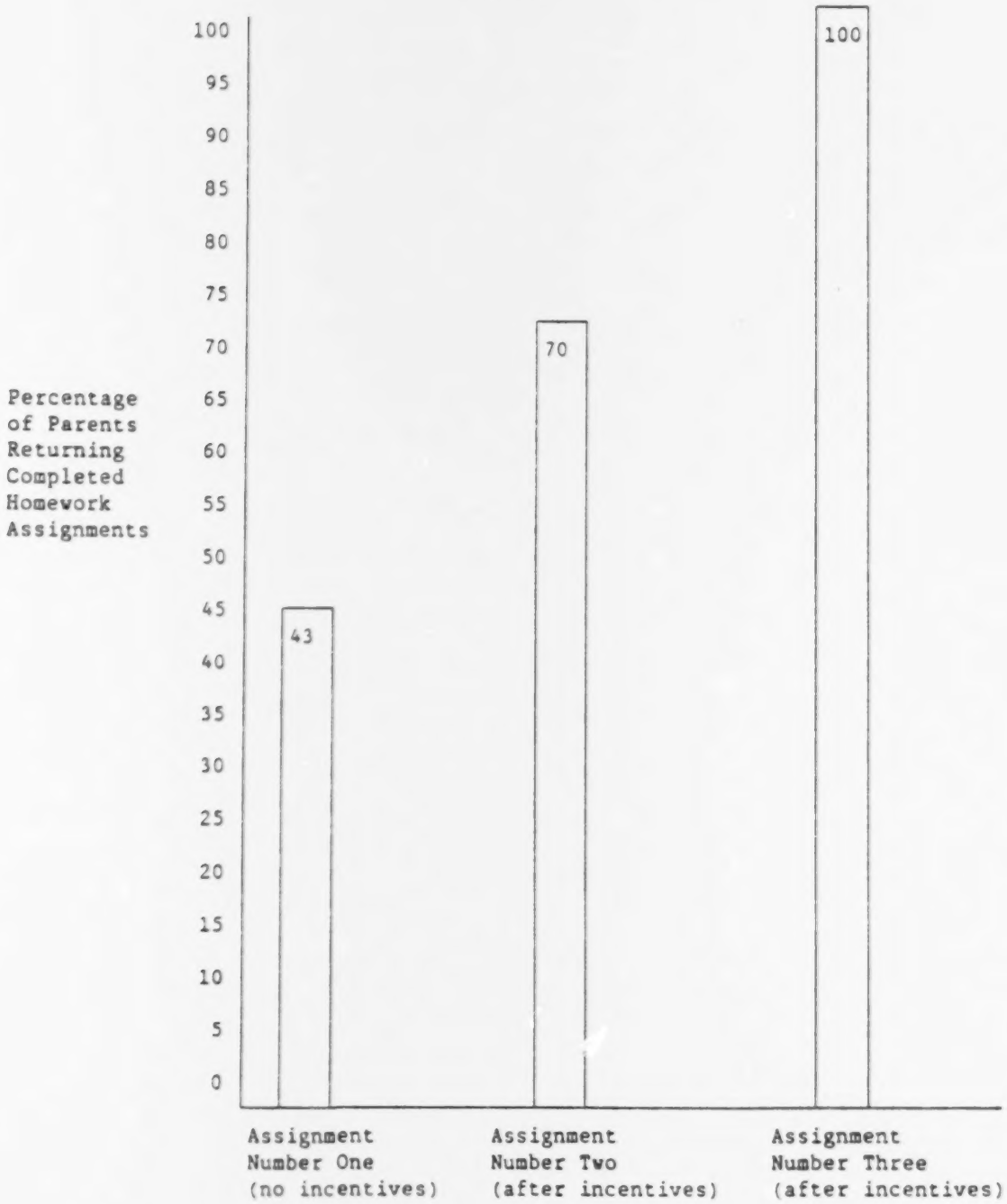
Programs Three and Four



APPENDIX D

PARENT HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS OF FIFTH GRADE ME-OLOGY STUDENTS
REPLY RESULTS

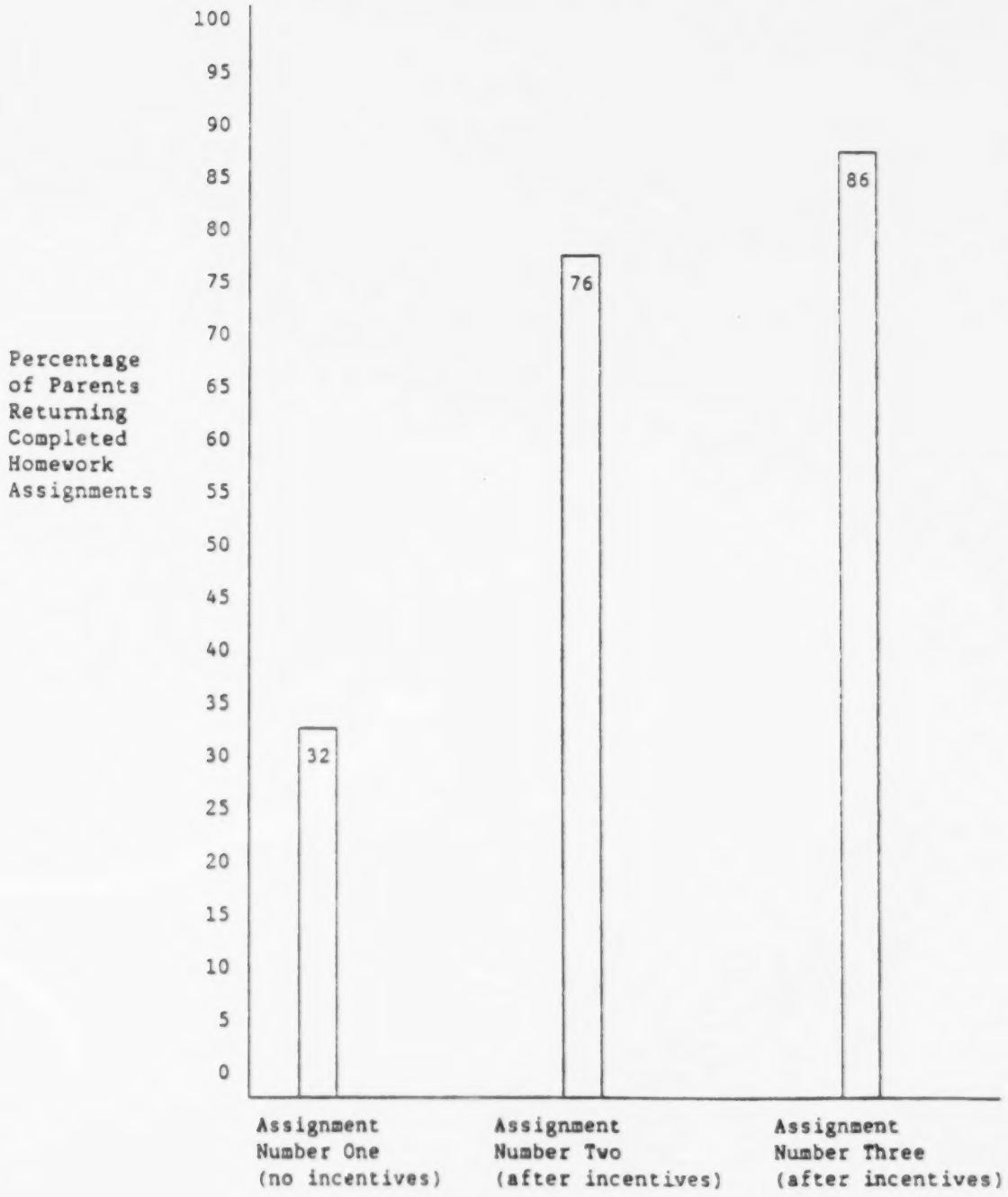
Teacher A



APPENDIX E

PARENT HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS OF FIFTH GRADE ME-OLOGY STUDENTS
REPLY RESULTS

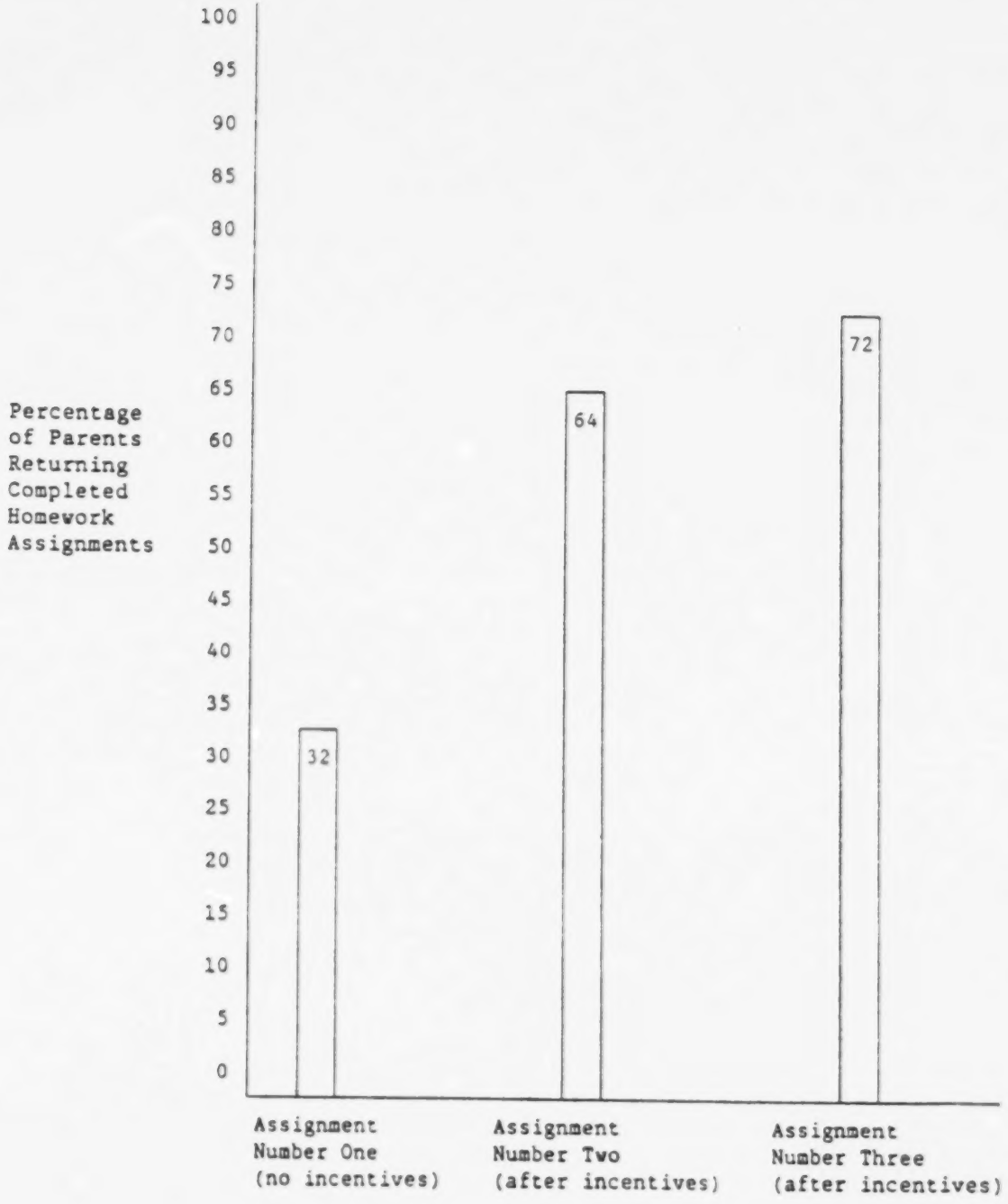
Teacher B



APPENDIX F

PARENT HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS OF FIFTH GRADE ME-OLOGY STUDENTS
REPLY RESULTS

Teacher C



APPENDIX G

DRUG EDUCATION NIGHT FOR PARENTS

PARENT SIGN-IN SHEET

My son/daughter is in:

	Kindergarten	1st Grade	2nd Grade	3rd Grade	4th Grade	5th Grade
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						
6.						
7.						
8.						
9.						
10.						
11.						
12.						
13.						
14.						
15.						
16.						
17.						
18.						
19.						
20.						
21.						
22.						
23.						
24.						
25.						

APPENDIX H

"Choices and Challenges"
Parent Drug Prevention Education Program

PARENT SIGN-IN SHEET

PLEASE PRINT YOUR NAME BELOW.

1.	21.
2.	22.
3.	23.
4.	24.
5.	25.
6.	26.
7.	27.
8.	28.
9.	29.
10.	30.
11.	31.
12.	32.
13.	33.
14.	34.
15.	35.
16.	36.
17.	37.
18.	38.
19.	39.
20.	40.